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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 KUWAIT 001288

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ANKARA FOR AMB WRPEARSON, ECON AJSIROTIC AND DART
AMMAN FOR USAID AND DART

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TFIZ01: DART/PRM SITUATION REPORT 6 APRIL 2003

SUMMARY

¶11. On 4 April, DART members in Umm Qasr met with Coalition forces, who provided an overview of the situation in the town. According to Coalition forces, 1,500 to 2,000 people from Basrah have moved to Umm Qasr. On 3 April, one Emergency Health Kit was sent from the OFDA warehouse to a hospital in Al Nasiriyah. The new three-kilometer pipeline that was laid from inside the Kuwaiti border to near Umm Qasr is experiencing problems related to traffic management and tanker access to the pipe stand. The DART has briefed ORHA and USAID Mission staff on DART plans for southern Iraq. The DART's APU has also continued to meet with NGOs and Coalition forces to coordinate on issues of abuse prevention and protection. END SUMMARY.

DART UPDATES FROM UMM QASR

¶12. On 4 April, DART members in Umm Qasr met with Coalition forces, who provided an overview of the situation in the town. According to Coalition forces, 1,500 to 2,000 people from Basrah have moved to Umm Qasr and are living with family or friends as a result of fighting in Basrah. Coalition forces also said that most Baath party members have fled Umm Qasr. On 3 April, residents burned down a house owned by a Baath party supporter. The same residents had planned to burn down several other homes but were dissuaded by one of the village elders.

¶13. Coalition forces emphasized that the international community could demonstrate its goodwill by arranging to send in affordable supplies of protein-rich foods, such as meat, eggs, and dairy products. According to Coalition forces, despite visits and promises by numerous delegations from civilian and military organizations, no substantial assistance has yet been delivered to the residents of Umm Qasr.

¶14. In addition to questioning residents at the town market about their needs, the DART located a Public Distribution System (PDS) agent in the crowd and introduced him to representatives from the World Food Program (WFP). The PDS agent said that 30 food agents once operated in the town, and that they are all eager to go back to work. The men in the crowd nodded in agreement, and said the food agents were 'good people', simply shopkeepers assigned by the Iraqi government to distribute food. The PDS agent interviewed by the DART and WFP had distributed food to 200 families, or about 600 people, and offered to arrange a meeting with the other food agents in town. The DART offered to facilitate the meeting next week, when the WFP team is expected to return.

HEALTH

¶15. On 3 April, one Emergency Health Kit was sent from the OFDA warehouse to Al Nasiriyah. This kit was delivered to a hospital in Al Nasiriyah by Coalition Forces. Two more kits were sent by Coalition aircraft on 5 April to Basrah. These kits will be forward positioned at Coalition warehouses until delivery is authorized by the DART. Emergency Health Kits will be made available to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as needs are identified, with strict criteria for their use. The DART will closely monitor the distribution and identify appropriate healthcare providers to receive the kits.

WATER

¶ 16. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the immediate concerns in southern Iraq are water and education. UNICEF sent five water tankers into Basrah on 4 April and is continuing to supply water to Umm Khayyal, Safwan, and Az Zubayr. UNICEF hopes to reestablish contact with its small contract staff in Basrah.

¶ 17. The new three-kilometer pipeline that was laid from inside the Kuwaiti border to near Umm Qasr is experiencing problems related to traffic management and tanker access to the pipe stand. The pipe stand is located within a high priority area, and only one tanker at a time is allowed into the compound, which creates a bottleneck of water tankers waiting and departing on very narrow side streets. In addition, the larger tankers (24,000 to 32,000 liters) contracted by UNICEF are having difficulties accessing the water pipe stand because of the small space. According to the HOC's water engineer, the stand is open daily for twelve hours and is producing 6,000 to 8,000 liters per hour, or about 100,000 liters per day. Until second and third water stands are added and the traffic congestion problem is resolved, the daily output of the pipeline will remain at a fraction of its intended output.

¶ 18. One of the water pipelines from Basrah that supplied Umm Qasr with wash water appears to be working as water is flowing from the pipeline into one of Umm Qasr's four water holding tanks for the first time since the war began. However, without the water treatment plant and pumps working, the Basrah pipelines will not be able to provide potable water to Umm Qasr.

¶ 19. On 5 April, the DART facilitated a meeting on water/sanitation at the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) with representatives from relief, reconstruction, and civil affairs. The agenda focused on bridging operational coordination until U.N. agencies are fully operational, especially UNICEF who has the lead on the health and water/sanitation sectors. Protocols will be developed and presented to the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), among others.

USG COORDINATION

¶ 10. On 5 April, the DART's Deputy Leader briefed ORHA leadership on anticipated DART movement into southern Iraq. The briefing covered the staffing and area of responsibility of the DART's Southern Field Office. ORHA was also briefed on the funding mechanisms that have been put in place and how commodities will be distributed in order to provide a quick response to the humanitarian needs of impacted populations throughout Iraq. The security conditions required for DART movement into Iraq, and the fact that DART interventions would be assessment-driven and needs-based, was stressed to the audience.

¶ 11. The DART's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) representative briefed each of the three regional coordinators from ORHA, and their respective staffs, on the DART's planned operations and modalities for small grants activities in Iraq. The DART also circulated program documents outlining planned procedures for design and implementation of grants. The briefings were well received by ORHA coordinators.

¶ 12. DART OTI representatives also met with USAID's Reconstruction Team in an effort to coordinate with its upcoming local government program, which is expected to begin mobilization by mid-April. The DART is working on coordinating database development for grants in Iraq. The reaction of the Reconstruction Team to the DART's plans has been positive, and the need for close coordination of both programs has been underscored.

ABUSE PREVENTION UNIT

¶ 13. On 2 April, the DART Abuse Prevention Unit (APU) met with ORHA's Human Rights Working Group (HRWG). The HRWG discussed the creation of a Human Rights Ombudsperson for Iraq that would be a central repository of past human rights abuses. This information could be used for a future truth and reconciliation commission or whatever judicial procedures are established after the transition period. The APU also discussed the implications that the dissolution of the Umm Qasr governing and judicial system, in addition to the food distribution system, has for protection and other transitional issues.

¶14. On 4 April, the APU met with a senior U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) civil-military operations planner. The APU inquired about Coalition plans for a police force in the event that the local police flee and the justice system dissolves. According to CENTCOM, there is no theater-wide plan for giving all regions military police, as conditions in each village will be different.

¶15. On 5 April, the APU met with human rights and humanitarian organizations including Physicians for Human Rights, Refugees International, the American Refugee Committee, and the Iraqi Refugee Aid Council (IRAC). ORHA's Human Rights Officer also participated. The group discussed unconfirmed reports of executions in southern Iraq received from civilians using satellite phones. Though these reports are unconfirmed, they have been received through non-governmental organization (NGO) networks and are believed to be fairly reliable sources. The APU will attempt to confirm them.

¶16. IRAC also reported on its previous efforts to secure a comprehensive computer database from the Iraqi General Security Organization that contains elaborate records of all civilians arrested, where they were imprisoned, and whether or not they have been killed. IRAC provided the location of this database, and the APU is making it a top priority to pass this information to Coalition Forces. The APU also has information on the location of the property registry office that holds all public and private property documents in Baghdad. Securing these documents is also a priority, and the APU will work with Coalition Forces to that end. IRAC pointed out that meticulous paper records have also been kept at the local level.

JONES